

Article Alert

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The books, articles, and web sites described in the Article Alert present a diversity of views in order to keep our IRC users abreast of current issues and concerns in the United States. These items represent the views and opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official U.S. Government policy.

New E-Journal

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The Challenges of Globalization



The World Bank defines globalization as "the growing integration of economies and societies around the world." Wikipedia, the Internet encyclopedia, describes globalization as "the changes in societies and the world economy that result from dramatically increased international trade and cultural exchange."

In this issue we consider these and other aspects of globalization. The experts we have chosen examine

the topic from a variety of angles, yet we offer no prescriptions, no definitive answers: Our goal is for our readers to come away with a better understanding of a deep-seated, complex phenomenon that affects us all.

- A Conversation About Globalization
- U.S. Transformational Economic Policy: Linking Trade, Growth, and Development
- The Changing Workplace: An Interview With Daniel Pink
- Is American Culture "American"?
- A European Considers the Influences of American Culture
- Photo Story
- Big Around the World
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- The Globalization of Crime and Terrorism
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- Global Issues in Higher Education

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New Publication

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Women of Influence



In recent years more and more societies all over the world have begun to recognize the vital contributions of women to commerce, their communities, and civic life. Whether it be Afghan women voting in a presidential election or women starting micro-businesses in Ethiopia, the worldwide trend toward greater equality is clear. Yet "the denial of women's basic human rights is persistent and widespread," as a 2005

United Nations Population Fund statement put it.

To commemorate International Women's Day, March 8, and National Women's History Month, we have created an electronic publication that highlights the achievements of some notable women in American history and their role in shaping today's democratic society in the United States. These women — from the Native-American Sacagawea, who guided white settlers through a vast wilderness, to Sojourner Truth, who fought for the end of slavery and equal rights for all, to Jeannette Rankin, who spoke for the health of women and children in Congress — believed that they had a contribution to make and did not shrink from the obstacles in their way. This account of their accomplishments is a reminder that all societies benefit from the talents and expertise of their women.

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DEMOCRACY & HUMAN RIGHTS

1. Blake, Charles; Martin, Christopher. "The Dynamics of Political Corruption: Re-Examining The Influence of Democracy." *Democratization*, vol. 13, no. 1, February 2006, pp. 1-14

Political scientists Blake and Martin use the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) to study democracy's influence on the probability of corruption. The authors argue that there is little to support the prevailing wisdom that democratic regimes hold governing officials more accountable than autocratic ones. They demonstrate that economic and cultural variables are a more predictable check on corruption than the role of democracy. However, the authors make a strong case that it is the consolidation of a "vital democratic process over time that has a robust, negative relationship with corruption." They note that democratic governments in Portugal and Spain have made significant progress in reducing perceived corruption. Other countries undergoing democratization and economic liberalization in recent years, such as Chile, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland, show that democracies, sooner or later, are more likely to develop the institutions and norms that tend to limit corruption. Building an enduring democracy alone is not a panacea for controlling corruption, they note, citing Italy as a case in point.

2. Camerer, Marianne. "Measuring Public Integrity." *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 17, no. 1, January 2006, pp. 152-64

The author, cofounder and international director of the NGO Global Integrity, provides a detailed explanation of the Public Integrity Index, the centerpiece of the Global Integrity Report, which is a culmination of her research on governance. The Public Integrity Index measures positive rather than negative factors, both qualitative and quantitative, and currently covers 25 countries. For a democratic state to endure, it must govern effectively; poor governance is characterized by corrupt leadership and lack of funds and technical capacity, but good governance is harder to define

or measure. Citizens, not just foreign donors or international organizations, need to see their governments perform better, especially in developing countries. Those governments must learn to use scarce resources effectively; ordinary people are increasingly aware that mismanagement and abuse of public trust are costly.

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND TRADE

3. Fischer, James; Finnell, Janine. "Challenges and Opportunities: Working Toward Clean, Abundant, Reliable, and Affordable Energy." *Resource*, vol. 13, no. 1, January/February 2006, pp. 9-10

The authors say worldwide energy use could grow by more than fifty percent -- with U.S. energy use expected to increase by a third -- in the next two decades. Increased global demand presents challenges to find new ways to increase energy efficiency, decrease carbon dioxide emissions, and replace aging electric grids that are growing increasingly vulnerable to power outages, they write. Technological advances are creating opportunities to transform energy consumption and production through such things as fuel cells, renewable energies, new lighting options, and distributed power networks, they explain. Energy policies can help accelerate these technologies by encouraging research and development, providing market-based incentives and educating consumers, the authors note.

4. Rajan, Raghuram. "Aid and Growth: the Policy Challenge." *Finance & Development*, vol. 42, no. 4, December 2005, pp. 53-55

Rajan, Director of the International Monetary Fund's research department, notes there is general agreement among economists that there is little evidence of a robust unconditional effect of aid on growth. He emphasizes that aid effectiveness studies need to distinguish between causality and correlation when interpreting country studies. Despite extensive country studies, no one has found a "magic bullet" for growth, he writes, but there



NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH MARCH 2006

The Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) is happy to announce a new electronic publication, "Women of Influence," suitable for post programs for Women's History Month, International Women's Day (March 8), and U.S. history and culture. This online publication is available at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/womeninfln/>

are clearly some things that seem important such as good governance, sensible macroeconomic management, laws and policies that support a positive business environment, and an economy open to international trade. Rajan recommends rich countries should make policies that meet these requirements an essential condition for aid, but cautions against micromanaging or being too prescriptive. Available online at: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2005/12/straight.htm>

GLOBAL ISSUES

5. Fischetti, Mark. "Protecting New Orleans." *Scientific American*, vol. 294, no. 2, February 2006, pp. 64-71

Millions of people worldwide live on river deltas that are vulnerable to flooding as human activity contributes to land sinking and sea levels rising. When Hurrican Katrina struck New Orleans in August of last year, levees (dikes) protecting the city failed during the storm surge, flooding wide areas of the city; loss of life and property was substantial. Plans are being developed to reconstruct and improve the levee system to protect from surges caused by category 5 storms, as well as restore coastal marshes that provide a natural buffer to hurricanes. Fischetti, a Scientific American contributing editor, reviews storm surge defenses used in other countries, which experts suggest should be considered for New Orleans. Diagrams illustrate floating and sluice gates used along the Netherlands coast, hydraulic disks on the River Thames near London, and flaps being installed to protect Venice, Italy. He notes the need to coordinate physical protection across governmental jurisdictions, incorporate scientific data into the plans, and address the issues of people living in such vulnerable areas.

6. Motavalli, Jim. "The Outlook on Oil." *E: The Environmental Magazine*, vol. 17, no. 1, January/February 2006, pp. 26-38

The author notes that the age of cheap oil is over; global demand is soaring, and oil producers are struggling to keep up. World demand for oil is likely to grow 50 percent by 2025, yet Motavalli notes that some experts believe that global oil production may reach a peak in the near future and begin to decline, due to depletion. A debate is raging on whether the world has already reached an "oil peak" and that development of new oil sources will not keep pace with world energy requirements. Some are concerned that Saudi Arabia has already "peaked", and that projections that rely heavily on future Saudi oil production are unrealistic. While there is still plenty of oil, much of the remaining reserves are in hard-to-reach reservoirs, or are difficult to refine. A number of books and websites have recently emerged to dissect peak oil scenarios. While the timing of the oil peak is still disputed, most analysts agree that too little oil is chasing too much demand and that U.S. dependence on cheap oil has dire consequences for every aspect of the U.S. economy. Finding the political will to address future energy challenges is not likely given the influence of the oil companies in Washington. The article contains four sidebars -- on the future of biodiesels (limited); the development of oil sands in Alberta, Canada; the role of energy conservation; and alternatives such as hydrogen, ethanol and electric vehicles.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

7. Corrales, Javier. "Hugo Boss." *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2006, pp. 32-40

Hugo Chavez, elected president of Venezuela, has revived authoritarianism in Latin America while continuing to win elections, eliminating "the contradiction between autocracy and political competitiveness," writes Corrales. The author details the acts Chavez has undertaken to remove any checks on his power while undermining, but not banning, the opposition by polarizing his society, spreading wealth selectively and fostering bureaucratic chaos. In addition, he says, Chavez uses U.S-bashing to unite and distract his followers. The worry is that others, seeing his success, may follow this new, model for modern authoritarianism.

U.S. SOCIETY AND VALUES

8. Pappu, Sridhar. "The Preacher." *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 297, no. 2, March 2006, pp. 92-103

Characterized as "a man of God, a promoter of upward mobility, an international evangelist, a husband and father, a simple preacher, [and] a sophisticated businessman," Bishop T.D. Jakes is depicted in this profile as a man who "epitomizes and stands at the front of a new generation of black leadership." Born to working-class parents in West Virginia, Jakes, a Pentecostal minister, is head of a 30,000-member nondenominational church. He has also built a lucrative multimedia empire, lectures on economic empowerment and self-healing to hundreds of thousands of people annually, and has spearheaded a growing international outreach program in Europe, Australia, and especially in Africa, where his church has invested over \$1 million in development projects.

9. Draper, Lee. "Philanthropy in Action: Managing The Workload." *Foundation News and Commentary*, vol. 47, no. 1, January/February 2006, pp. 12-19

The author, president of Draper Consulting Group, offers a number of tips for grantmakers (as well as for everybody else) who are doing more work with smaller staffs. Based on interviews with leading professionals, this article addresses meeting increased demands, maintaining high standards, seeking technological solutions, balancing work with life outside the office, and focusing on priorities. Sidebars provide strategies for handling major time wasters, e-mail, self-care, and workload. "If [a task] is not relevant and essential to carry out the mission, eliminate it," Draper concludes. Available online at <http://www.foundationnews.org/CME/article.cfm?ID=3518>

2005-Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Indonesia

Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor; March 8, 2006

Available online at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61609.htm>

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